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TIP CAGERS SHOW BRIGHT SPOTS ON ROAD WHILE DROPPING TWO TOUGH OPENING CONTESTS

MISSOULA--

The Montana Grizzlies may have lost two games on the road last weekend by pretty good margins, but road wins, especially in the basketball-crazy Midwest, are pretty hard to come by, and the Grizzlies did show bright spots in losing.

Surprisingly enough, Coach Ron Nord displayed the most pleasure over the performances of his younger players in the losses to Illinois State, 76-93, and Northern Michigan, 74-93.

The head mentor singled out three sophomores, center Tom Jones, guard John Cheek and guard-forward Sid Rhinehard, for good comments.

"All three played real good physical and mental games, not really like one would expect a normal sophomore to do," he said Wednesday.

Jones performed best against Northern Michigan, scoring 10 points and grabbing five rebounds while playing less than half the game. Cheek saw limited action in both games, scoring six total points while playing good defense.

Rhinehard also had his best game against Northern Michigan, coming in early in the second half to score nine points on three for three from the field and three free shots. His quick moves sprung him loose several times under the basket.

Outstanding among the more seasoned players was junior college transfer guard Ron Moore. The 6-4 sharpshooter tallied 20 points and got nine rebounds against Illinois State and garnered 16 points against Northern Michigan. He leads the Tips in scoring and rebounding after two games.

The Grizzlies fought back well in both games after falling behind in the early stages. Saturday night, Illinois State went ahead by seven at the half, and got ahead by as many

more

as nine before the Grizzlies pulled to within four with 14:43 remaining in the game. The Redbirds pulled away steadily after that.

Monday night, in Marquette, Mich., the Bruins found themselves behind Northern Michigan 19-4 with only six minutes gone in the game. The Tips pulled to within three with seven minutes gone in the half before Stan Albeck's Wildcats moved to a 13-point lead at halftime.

The Grizzlies came on strong to start the second half behind the shooting of soph. Mark Agather, who poured in 10 of the Tips' 19 points in the first eight minutes of the half.

A 15-footer by Agather made the score 59-56, Northern Michigan on top, with 12:31 left in the game. Five quick fouls against the Grizzlies enabled the Wildcats to pull out of reach during the next four minutes.

Nord's main worry is correction of the mechanical errors that helped the Grizzlies "beat themselves" both nights.

"We outshot both teams from the field, and outrebounded Illinois State," he said. "Our effort and hustle were good, but we've just got to get to know each other better so we can play better together."

The Grizzlies, in effect, were beaten from the foul line both nights. Against Illinois State, Nord's squad was called for fouls 29 times as compared to 17 for the Redbirds. The Birds outscored the Grizzlies 25-12 from the charity stripe. Three Tips fouled out.

Monday night, the Grizzlies were charged with 24 violations to 17 for Northern Michigan. The Wildcats picked up 11 points on the Grizzlies from the line, and two Grizzlies left on violations.

This week, Montana faces Augustana College of Sioux Falls, S.D. in the Grizzly home opener. The Vikings also had a rude opening week, losing to Loyola of Chicago, 79-125, and DePaul, 79-111, both on the road.

The Viks showed better against Northern Illinois, also on the road, losing by two to the team that nearly beat Indiana in Indiana two nights before.

"Augustana will be plenty tough," Nord says. "They're fundamentally sound, and will give us plenty of trouble. They aren't anything like their first two losses make them look, because they were simply outclassed by Loyola and DePaul."

The two schools will meet Saturday night in the Harry Adams Field House.